Detective E. O. Miles Gives Out Affidavit From Young Stenographer Repudiating Transcript He Swore to

AFFIDAVIT OBTAINED IN WASHINGTON D. C.

G. C. Febuary Gives Out a Statement, Telling How Notes Were Transcribed and Affidavits Made

The accuracy of the now famous pictograph records of alleged conversations between Thomas B. Felder, Mayor Woodward, C. C. Jones, E. O. Miles, G. C. Febuary and A. S. Colyar is attacked in an affidavit which E. O. Miles has turned over to Mayor Woodward and which he says he obtained from George M. Gentry, the young stenographer who took down the dictograph conversations.

This affidavit was made in Washington D. C., where Miles, one of the dictographed parties, who is a private detective, says he found Gentry. According to this affidavit, Gentry swears that a number of changes were made in the pictograph records after they were transcribed by him. The only specific change set out in the affdavit, however, is that the names of Police Chief Beavers and Detective Chief N. A. Lanford were written into the record of Mayor Woodward's conversation by some one other than the stenographer.

In this affidavit Gentry explains his disappearance from the city by declaring that when he compared the published records with his stenographic notes he realized that he had been duped and did not care to face the humiliation which he anticipated would follow.

These dictographed records, duly sworn to by young Gentry and others, were published in The Journal, which declined to print these documents unless they were attested before a notary public. These records and affidavits are still in the possession of The Journal, and this paper has no knowledge concerning the alleged changes.

GENTRY READ PROOFS.

Young Gentry was permitted to use one of The Journal's typewriters to transcribe his pictograph notes. He and Febuary were left alone in the news department Wednesday night, May 21, to do this work. They left a copy of the records in a desk drawer for The Journal. Early on the morning of May 23 Gentry furnished The Journal with an affidavit attesting the correctness of the records. Later he came to The Journal office with his notebook and read the proofs which compared with this shorthand notes, and in one or two places he made minor changes, as he said, to better conform to the original notes.

He was advised to preserve his notes so that in the event any question was raised as to their accuracy, he would have the stenographic record from which to make answer.

The Journal does not undertake to say whether there are or are not discrepancies in the transcribed records compared to the shorthand notes. It has simply relied upon the sworn records and statements furnished by Gentry and others, which records and statements, as stated above, are still in the possession of The Journal and in exactly the same condition as they were when turned over to this paper by Gentry, February and others.

FEBUARY MAKES STAETMENT [sic].

G. C. Febuary, secretary to Detective Chief N. A. Lanford, who was a party to some of the dictographed conversations and who was with Gentry, the stenographer, when some of the pictograph notes were transcribed, has furnished The Journal with the following statement:

"The dictograph conversations between A. S. Colyar, T. B. Felder and myself were transcribed on a typewriter in the news department of The Atlanta Journal by George M. Gentry, the stenographer who took the conversations down in a shorthand as he heard them through a dictograph.

"John Paschall and Harllee Branch, of The Atlanta Journal, were present for about an hour and a half and A. S. Colyar was present for about half an hour. Gentry began transcribing the

dictographed record about 10 p. m., Wednesday, May 21. When Mr. Paschall and Mr. Branch found Gentry would not be able to complete the work as soon as expected they left and directed that the copy intended for The Journal be left in a designated desk drawer. Colyar had been gone for about an hour when they left.

"The record was completed about 4 o'clock the next morning, and a copy was left in the desk drawer for The Journal. Neither Mr. Paschall nor Mr. Branch made any suggestions as to the contents of the record. They were only waiting for get a copy for The Journal.

"Both of these gentleman advised Gentry that if there was anything in his notes which he could not read he should indicate this fact in the record, and not to put anything in the record not contained in his notes. He was informde [sic] repeatedly that he would be expected to swear to the accuracy of the record.

HOW AFFIDAVIT WAS MADE.

"After leaving The Journal office Gentry and I spent the balance of the night together. We ate breakfast together, after which Gentry went to his work at the General Fire Extinguisher company, and later in the morning I went to The Journal office and got the copy of the record that had been left there. I took this copy down to Gentry and he went before Charles H. Tranaou, a notary public, and made an affidavit attesting the accuracy of the contents of the record, no one being present but Gentry, Mr. Transou and myself.

"A short time later I took the record and accompanied by A. S. Colyar went before W. W. Brown, a notary public. Both Colyar and myself made affidavit as to the correctness of the record.

"The record covering the conversations between Mayor James G. Woodward, E. O. Miles, A. S. Colyar and myself was transcribed by Gentry at his office and on his own typewriter. I was present but a part of the time while he was doing this work. This record, like that between T. B. Felder, A. S. Colyar and myself, was sworn to

by Gentry before Charles S. Transou and Colyar and I attested it before W. W. Brown.

"To the best of my recollection and knowledge Gentry transcribed the record covering the conversation between C. C. Jones, E. O. Miles and A. S. Colyar on the day he transcribed the record of the conversation between Mayor Woodward, E. O. Miles, A. S. Colyar and myself.

"The records are published in The Atlanta Journal, so the best of my knowledge and beliefs were identical trans- of the records Gentry himself transcribed, swore to and turned over to me."

GENTRY'S LATEST AFFIDAVIT.

Following is a copy of the Gentry affidavit furnished Mayor Woodward by E. O. Miles:

"District of Columbia, City of Washington—Personally appeared before me, the undersigned, a notary public of the District of Columbia, George M. Gentry, who, on oath, states that:

"On Wednesday, May 21, 1913, at or about 10 o'clock in the morning, Mr. Gay C. February called me over the telephtone [sic] and desired to know if I would do some stenographic work for him. I told him I would, but that I couldn't get off until noon. He said that they were in a hurry for it and he would like for me to come at once, so I arranged to get off and went down to his office, and the chief told me he wanted me to take down some testimony, and he asked me if I could write very fast. Mr. Febuary asslred [sic] Chief Lanford that I was a good stenographer and could do the work all right. The chief then told me that the work he wanted done required somebody that could be trusted all right, and I assured him that I always treated all stenographic work I did as confidential. Chief Lanford told me then that what he wanted me to do was to take down a conversation that would take place in a hotel, and he asked me if I thought I could take it over a dictophone. (Mr. Surles coming in at that time with a satchel, which he opened and which contained wires and other paraphernalia in connection with a dictograph outfit.)

"After a few minutes, during which time Mr. Febuary was absent, we went over to the Williams house No. 2, on North Forsyth street, Atlanta, Fulton county, Georgia (Mr. Febuary and I), and I was instructed to go into Room No. 21 of this hotel. Mr. Surles and Mr. Colyar were there, and they probably had to make arrangements for adjoining rooms, as Mr. Surles commented to me that they hadn't decided just what to do with the dictographs. After a time Colyar came in and instructed Surles to follow him, and gave me instructions to await his wishes. Later on Mr. Febuary came in, and I told him that if I had to wait much longer by myself I was going back to the office.

SAW DICTOGRAPHS INSTALLED.

"I was then allowed to come into the room, where they were installing the dictographs (one on each end of the bottom board of the bureau just under the bottom drawer on the back of the board), and the wires being run through the keyhole of the door between Room 31 and Room 32. The bureau was then screwed against the door facing. At about 12:30 I started getting accustomed to Febuary's and Colyar's voices.

"At first I could not hear at all, but gradual[l]y I was able to hear more distinctly and after an hour or two of diligent practices I was able to use the dictograph and to distinguish voices very clearly. Right at the beginning I found that I would not be able to hear anything with the windows up. When they were closed it became rather stuffy and this, coupled with the strain I was under, added to the distraction. I stopped particing [sic] at 2:45 that afternoon and went downstairs to the office of the hotel, where I awaited Mr. Felder's arrival.

SAW FELDER ARRIVE.

"I saw him cross Forsyth street, and after he, Febuary and Colyar went upstairs, or were just about at the top of the stairs, I started up and saw the three enter Room 31 of the Williams house, located as mentioned previously. I then immediately went into room 32 and closed the door, partly, but did not lock it. The

windows were down and so I went directly to the table and placed the receiver over my head and started writing what I heard. I took down all the conferences that took place. At somewhere around 5 that afternoon I left the hotel and went to Mr. R. B. Bliss' house and took some dictation. From there I went home and changed my collar. I returned to the office of the General Fire Extinguisher company, 376 Marietta street, where I wrote the dictation he had given me, signed his letters and then met Mr. Febuary there at the office. We went to the Candler restaurant to supper and from there we returned to the Williams house to keep an appointment with Colyar at about 7:30. At about 8 o'clock Mr. Miles and Mr. C. C. Jones and Colyar went up to the ‘conference room' and Mr. Febuary and I to the ‘information reception room.'

"I placed the retriever over my head, and in order to be sure that I would hear everything, Mr. Febuary stood behind me and held them pressed tightly to my ears. This conference lasted about thirty minutes. Between 8:30 and 9:15 Wednesday night Mr. Febuary loafed about town, as we had an appointment with Mr. Branch and Mr. Paschal at 9:30 at the Williams house, and as they were not in The Journal office, we had to kill time until they showed up. I left Mr. Febuary and Mr. Colyar at The Journal office at 9:15 and went over to the Williams house to wait for the arrival of The Journal reporters mentioned above. They came in shortly and we went over to The Journal office and all of us (Colyar, Febuary, Branch, Paschal and myself) went up to the editorial department, where a machine was selected and I then went to work transcribing what I had heard.

SAYS CHANGES WERE MADE.

"Right at the start I made Colyar angry because when I did not hear what was said I put dashes and so I allowed him to dictate several answers and questions, which do not appear in my notebook and which I am not positive that I heard. I did not hear Mayor Woodward mention Chief Beavers or Chief Lanford during the whole conversation, nor did I write it in the transcription of my notes, these names being evidently added by other parties. At

4:30 Thursday morning, May 22, I finished transcribing my notes and turned the papers over to Mr. Febuary. Later on during the morning he came down to the office, bringing an affidavit which I had written for me to sign before a notary public. He told me that they had made only a few minor changes in the transcription, and that all I had to do was to sign the affidavit which I did. However, I noticed that some interlineations had been made in my copy, or rather in Chief Lanford's copy, as I had no copy.

Colyar and the reporters, just before I started to transcribe my notes, argued as to the number of copies that should be made. They agreed that one copy should be made for the chief, one for Colyar and one for The Journal, and that no more should be made. This kept me from having a copy. I had my notebook, however, and it was the comparison on my notes with the published articles that lead to my discovery that in addition to the several answers and questions which Colyar had personally dictated, other changes had been made, namely that insertion of the names of Chief Beavers and Chief Lanford, in the conference with Mayor Woodward, also many other variations occurred, changing the sense of the statement, and since they had my affidavit attached to the papers I felt that I had been duped.

"As to the remuneration of my services, will say that The Journal reporters, Branch and Paschal, agreed to pay me $5 to get the work written Wednesday night, so it could be published in Thursday's paper. Saturday morning, after the appearance of the article in Friday's Journal, The Georgian's reporter came to the office and offered me either $25 or $45, I do not recollect which, for a copy of the conference with Mayor Woodward, February, Miles and Colyar, and Miles, Jones and Colyar's conference. I declined the offer. I then went to see The Journal's reporters and told them that The Georgian had offered me money for a copy of the conference, and they agreed to pay me $50 to hold my notebook from Saturday until Monday. I turned my notebook over to Mr. Brice, who gave it to his stenographer to keep until

Monday. Later during the day the reporters told me that The Georgian had gotten a copy, and so I was too late.

LOCKED UP NOTEBOOK.

"I then went down to Mr. Brice's office and asked Miss M.—, Mr. Brice's stenographer, for my notebook, and I took it home and locked it up. Monday, when I went up to see Major Cohen about the $50 he went down to look for Mr. Brice, whom he was unable to find. Later we went back upstairs together and Branch and Paschal explained to him their promise to pay me $50 for allowing The Journal to retain my notebook. However some argument arose over the fact that I took my notebook out of The Journal's office Saturday night. I told them that they had agreed to give me $50 not to make a copy for The Georgian, and that I had not made the copy for The Georgian, and had, therefore, carried out my part of the compact. They then told be to come back later on and see Mr. Brice about it. I returned after awhile, I believe it was around 1 o'clock, and Mr. Brice paid me the amount in currency and took my receipt.

"Chief Lanford has not as yet paid me for my services, from the fact that I have not rendered a bill.

"Saturday morning, before the publication of the Woodward conference, held at 4 o'clock Wednesday, May 21, as previously mentioned, and the Jones conference, held at 8 o'clock the same night, I went to the editorial department of The Journal and requested a proof of what they were going to print. Colyar, who had one reading it, declined to allow me to have a proof, and so I left The Journal building, suspicious.

"Saturday afternoon I went down to the office, carrying with me my original notebook, and a copy of Friday's and Saturday's Journal. I compared them all the way through and upon seeing the many variations in what was printed and what I had in my notes, I realized that my transcriptions had been tampered with, and that I had just cause for the suspicions which were aroused by their refusal to allow me to read the proofs Saturday morning.

BECOMES VERY NERVOUS.

"Having signed the affidavits, at Mr. Febuary's request, in which I swore to what I had heard, and seeing something entirely different published, I became very nervous and uneasy. Saturday night when I went home, a reporter called up and said he was one of The Journal reporters and wanted to see me a few minutes. I told him to come over. He came in and introduced himself to me as Mr. Starr, The Journal. My other and aunt recognized his voice as that of a reporter who had called shortly before I came home, and said he was from The Georgian. They both rushed into the sitting room and told me that he was not with The Journal, but was the same fellow that came a few minutes ago, and said he was from The Georgian. He denied that he had said he was from The Journal, although he had told both myself and my grandfather, who went to answer the door bell, that he was from The Journal. Just before he left he informed me that a warrant had been sworn out for Febuary's, Colyar's and my arrest, and upon my directing him as to where the door out could be found, he departed, saying that he had got the information he wanted.

"Sunday afternoon, at the office, someone called me up and informed me that I would probably be arrested Monday, I did not recognize the voice, and so am unable to say who it was. They also informed me that I would have to make bond in order to be released. I asked who it was, and they hung up or were cut off.

BROTHER HAS NOTEBOOK.

"Monday morning Colyar requested that I turn my notebook over to The Journal and said he would give me $5 if I would show him a receipt from The Journal for the notebook. I came near allowing The Journal to have the notebook, but instead gave it to my brother to take home and instructed him to allow no one to have it.

"Developments later showed me the character of some of the people connected with this transaction and it made me so ashamed of my connection with it that I was afraid I could not

face the humiliation that I thought would naturally onsite, and also the fact that they had changed my transcription showed to me very clearly that I was mixed up with a bunch of crooks.

"I am prepared to read my notes whenever it becomes necessary. These notes will show exactly what I heard.

"The foregoing affidavit is made by me voluntarily, unsolicited, and no money or the promise of any remuneration whatever was offered to me for making it, my sole motive being to give the straight history of my connection with the now ‘infamous' dictograph affair.

"GEORGE M. GENTRY.

"JEANNETTE HENNING, Notary Public, District of Columbia."

Lanford Declares He Does Not Know About Any Changes

Detective Chief N. A. Lanford Wednesday morning declared that he knew absolutely nothing concerning the alleged tampering with the dictograph records.

"The records were typewritten and sworn to when they were brought to me," said the chief, "I still have them in my possession and no changes have been made in them since they were turned over to me. Personally, I do not believe that they were ever tampered with or doctored. According to Gentry's latest affidavit he still has his notes. It would be quite a simple matter for him to take these notes and point out the alleged changes. All I want is the truth about the affair.

Chief Lanford, upon reading the alleged affidavit, sent the following telegram to police Chief James L. Beavers, who is in Washington attending the convention of the National Police Chiefs association:

"Atlanta, Georgia, June 11, 1913,

"J. L. Beavers,

"Care Convention Chiefs Police.

"Washington, D. C.

"I understand that George M. Gentry is in Washington and that he made affidavit before Jeannette Henning, notary public, District of Columbia, to the effect that his notes made in dictograph of Colyar and Felder matter were padded. Please have him located and ascertain if this is true and if so under what conditions this affidavit was made, and advise.

"N. A. LANFORD,

"Chief of Detectives."

"My Vindication Complete," Declares Thomas B. Felder

Thomas B. Felder, commenting upon the affidavit of George M. Gentry, says:

"Gentry's affidavit is a complete vindication. It bears out my statement that the whole thing was a frame-up on the part of Newport Lanford and his hirelings. Everyone agrees with me now that I was the innocent victim of a dirty, contemptible plot.

"The notebook is not in the hands of Gentry's brother. It was at the time he left Atlanta, but it is now in a safe deposit vault and I have the key.

"I have given Mayor Woodward a copy of the affidavit, and I expect he will ask the grand jury to look into the matter.

"So far as I am personally concerned, the incident is closed with this vindication. Gentry will return to Atlanta within the next week or ten days, and he may have something additional to say."

Says Police Board Ought to Investigate

Other than to say the police board ought to make a thorough investigation of the detective department. Mayor Woodward Wednesday morning made no statement in reference to the Gentry affidavit.

"This young man's affidavit certainly is enough to convince me that Lanford and his aggregation of so-called detectives are not very careful as to the methods they employ, to say the least of it," said the mayor. "It is time for the police board to give the

detective department a thorough airing, and I'm not so sure but what the city would be better off if the whole detective crew were kicked out and new ones elected. We certainly couldn't get much worse than we've got now."

It was the mayor's first intention Wednesday to give out a written statement in reference to the Gentry affidavit, but later he changed his mind. In this connection he said:

"There was nothing in the dictograph record, even as the detectives gave it out, that worried me. There was nothing in it that I was ashamed of, or cared to explain.

"The Gentry affidavit was not gotten at my instigation. I cared nothing about the dictograph. I knew nothing about the Gentry affidavit until it was handed to me by Ed Miles about 9 o'clock Tuesday night."

Miles Will Not Divulge Young Gentry's Address

E. O. Miles, the private detective who figured in the dictograph conversations and who brought back from Washington the alleged affidavit from Gentry charging that the dictograph records had been padded, refuses to tell whether Gentry can be found. He will not say whether he is withholding this information at Gentry's request.

Mr. Miles says he went to Washington after the affidavit in the interest of those who had been dictographed. Further than this he would not talk.